

OVERVIEW

The purpose of the DHS-1927, Child Adoption Assessment, is to provide an accurate and full description of the child, including the child's special needs and history, for the following uses:

- As a tool for matching a child who is available for adoption with a family whose abilities to parent are well-suited to the child's needs and characteristics.
- To help in developing an individual recruitment plan when a child does not have an identified family.
- To provide the child with a reliable source of history and information about him/herself.
- To assess the medical and psychological needs of the child and gather appropriate professional documentation for submission of an adoption medical subsidy application.

The child adoption assessment is a critical document since it provides an adoptee with hereditary and biological information. It is critical that adoption workers include all known information in this assessment.

ASSESSMENT REQUIRED INFORMATION

The assessment must summarize all information available at the time of completion. This includes medical, emotional, developmental, and educational information obtained through current service providers and schools. Information in the assessment must also include historical information about the child and the biological family. If any of the above information is not available, the assessment must document the efforts made to obtain the information and the reason it is not available.

Factors listed in the adoption placement criteria section of the child assessment are critical in determining what is in the best interest of the child and in securing a successful placement. Efforts must be made to contact all possible sources of information, including birth family members, if necessary.

A DHS-606, Child Adoption Assessment Addendum, must be completed if all information required in the child adoption assessment was not reasonably available within the required time frame for the

completion of the DHS-1927, Child Adoption Assessment. An addendum must be completed at least annually if the child has not been placed for adoption and when there is a change in placement or other significant event for the child. All addenda must be completed prior to adoptive placement.

CHILD ADOPTION ASSESSMENT TIME FRAMES

The DHS-1927, Child Adoption Assessment, must be completed by the adoption worker and approved by the adoption supervisor within 45 calendar days of case acceptance. The adoption worker must verify that the information provided through the foster care DHS-65, Initial Service Plan (ISP), and DHS-66, Updated Service Plans (USP), is correct and include all additional information required on the assessment form. Prior to completing the child adoption assessment, the adoption worker must make a minimum of two face-to-face contacts with the child, with at least one in the home, and one face-to-face with the child's current caregiver, even if the caregiver(s) are not interested in adopting the child. The contacts must be documented in the child assessment.

CHILD ADOPTION ASSESSMENT FORMAT

Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS) workers and contracted agency adoption workers must use the DHS-1927, Child Adoption Assessment, and complete each section thoroughly. The DHS-1927, Child Adoption Assessment, may be supplemented with additional information. The format of the DHS-1927, Child Adoption Assessment, allows for the agency to add individual office information at the top of the form. Hidden text in the DHS-1927, Child Adoption Assessment template describes required information in each section.

The DHS-1927 consists of two sections, which are divided in order to separate identifying information from non-identifying information.

Identifying Information

The first section contains identifying information about the child, the family of origin and the child's placement history. An adoption agency responsible for adoption planning is required by state law to

compile and preserve the identifying information if it is reasonably obtainable [MCL 710.27]. **This identifying information, including first names, which could reveal the identity of the child's birth family, siblings or foster families who have cared for the child, must not be disclosed;** see SRM 131.

Non-identifying Information

The second section contains non-identifying information about the child. This section contains a description of the physical and emotional needs, interests and abilities of the child that must be considered in making decisions about an adoptive placement. This non-identifying information may be disclosed. Information which can be used to distinguish an individual's identity (including first or last names of the birth parent(s) and siblings) is considered identifying information and must not be disclosed; see SRM 131, Confidentiality, for additional information.

Note: The first name of the child or sibling group members being placed for adoption together may be used in the non-identifying information section of the Child Adoption Assessment. If a sibling group is not being placed for adoption together, the adoption worker shall only identify the age, sex of the sibling, sibling characteristics and sibling relationship in the non-identifying information section of the child adoption assessment.

Supervisory Approval

The DHS-1927, Child Adoption Assessment, must be reviewed and approved by the adoption supervisor within the 45 calendar days from acceptance allowed for the completion of the child assessment. Contracted adoption agencies must forward a copy of the child assessment to the local DHHS adoption monitor within five calendar days of completion, not to exceed 50 calendar days from the acceptance of the case, for inclusion in the child's permanent record.

If there is a delay in completing the child adoption assessment within 45 calendar days, a memo explaining the delay must be sent to the DHHS adoption manager in central office.

Distribution

The adoption worker or assigned DHHS adoption monitor must provide a copy of the child assessment to the foster care worker.

**CHILD ADOPTION
ASSESSMENT
ADDENDUM**

The DHS-606, Child Adoption Assessment Addendum, must be used to update the DHS-1927, Child Adoption Assessment, on an annual basis if the child has not been placed for adoption. The DHS-606, Child Adoption Assessment Addendum must also be completed when there is a change in placement or other significant event for the child. The addendum must reflect significant changes and child development updates from the previous assessment. The addendum must provide current information that would be significant to a prospective adoptive family.

Contracted adoption agencies must forward a copy of the Child Adoption Assessment addendum to the local DHHS adoption monitor within five calendar days of completion, for inclusion in the child's permanent record.

Distribution

The adoption worker or assigned DHHS adoption monitor must provide a copy of the child adoption assessment addendum to the foster care worker.